*Clean Copy of the Claims*

*Following Entry of This Amendment*

1.(amended) A local network with a plurality of subscribers each connected to a ring network by an optical data line to transmit data, comprising:

a first subscriber is configured as a data source to provide compressed audio and video data;

a second subscriber configured to receive transmitted audio data;

a third subscriber configured to receive the transmitted video data,

a fourth subscriber that includes

(i) a bit stream decoder decode the incoming compressed audio and video data and provide decompressed data;

(ii) a separating stage that receives said decompressed data and separates audio and video data within said compressed data to provide a decompressed video data signal and a decompressed audio data signal; and

(iii) a control unit that controls the transmission of said decompressed video data signal and said decompressed audio data signal onto the ring network.

2.(amended) The local network of claim 1, wherein the bit stream decoder is situated before the separation stage in the data stream of the compressed audio and video data.

3.(amended) The local network of claim 2, comprising several other data sinks which do not have any bit stream decoders and which forward the data conducted to them by the bit stream decoder of the data sink to the output units associated with them.

4.(amended) The local network of claim 1, wherein the data sink with its bit stream decoder is

separate from the other data sinks and is connected through an optical data line.

5.(amended) The local network of claim 4, characterized in that the data sink is connected to its associated output unit for reproducing one type of data, through a common optical data line for transmitting audio as well as video data.

6.(amended) The local network of claim 1, characterized in that the bit stream decoder associated with the data sink is situated in the data stream of compressed audio and video data after the separation stage of the data sink, and that at least one other bit stream decoder in the other data sinks decodes the separated data that are transmitted through the optical data line.

7.(amended) The local network of claim 1, wherein said bit stream decoder comprises an MPEG-1 decoder.

8.(amended) The local network of claim 1, wherein the bit stream decoder can be configured as an MPEG-1 decoder, an MPEG-2 decoder, an AC-3 decoder, or an JPEG decoder depending upon the transmitted control data received over the ring network by the bit stream decoder

9.(amended) A method for reproducing audio and video data in a local network, comprising:

transmitting compressed audio and video data from a data source through an optical data line to a data sink;

receiving said compressed audio and video data;

decompressing received compressed audio and video data to provide decompressed data;

processing said decompressed data at the data sink to provide decompressed audio data and decompressed video data; and

transmitting said decompressed audio data and said decompressed video data from the data sink onto the ring network.

10.(amended) The method of claim 9, wherein said step of receiving, decompressing, processing and transmitting occur in the same data sink.

--11. A method for decompressing audio and video data in a local ring network, comprising:

at a first data sink, (i) receiving compressed data transmitted along a transmission medium of a local ring network at a first data sink, (ii) processing said compressed data to provide a decompressed audio signal, and (ii) transmitting said decompressed audio signal onto the local ring network; and

at a second data sink, (i) receiving the compressed data transmitted along the transmission medium of the local ring network, (ii) processing said compressed data to provide a decompressed video signal, and (ii) transmitting said decompressed audio signal onto the local ring network.--

--12. The local network of claim 1, wherein said bit stream decoder comprises an MPEG-2 decoder.--

--13. The local network of claim 1, wherein said bit stream decoder comprises an AC-3 decoder.--

--14. The local network of claim 1, wherein said bit stream decoder comprises a JPEG decoder.--

--15. The local network of claim 1, wherein said bit stream decoder comprises a video decoder and an audio decoder.--

--16. A subscriber unit for use in a local network that includes a data source which provides compressed multimedia data, a first data sink that plays back decompressed audio data, and a second data sink having a display device that plays back decompressed video data, wherein said subscriber unit, the data source and the first and second data sinks are each connected to a ring network by an optical data line to transmit onto and receive data from the ring network, said subscriber unit comprising:

(i) a bit stream decoder that decodes the compressed audio and video data and provides decompressed data indicative thereof;

(ii) a separating stage that receives said decompressed data, and separates audio and video data within said decompressed data to provide a decompressed video data signal and a decompressed audio data signal; and

(iii) a control unit controls the transmission of said decompressed video data signal and said decompressed audio data signal onto the ring network.--